Leaflet

Public & Private Workers of Canada

Est. 1963

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE WORKERS OF CANADA

PPWC

Public and Private Workers of Canada

In This Issue...

P3 President's Report
P4 National 1st Vice Report
P4 National 2nd Vice Report
P5 Health & Safety Officer Report
P6 From the Locals
P10 CCU
P12 Shop Stewards' Corner

Fall 2025

Pexels/Lure of Adventure

LETTER FROM EDITOR

Welcome to our PPWC Members,

Welcome to the Fall 2025 Edition of the Leaflet.

In this edition of the Leaflet, we have lots of great articles from our Officers, the CCU, Local events, Local reports, bursary winners and more! Please take the time and review what the National & Locals at the PPWC are up to around the province.

If you have an article that you would like to include in the upcoming Leaflet editions, you can forward it through your Local to be passed on to the National at national@ppwc.ca.

Enjoy your Fall and festive season. Stay safe.

In Solidarity, Geoff Dawe,
PPWC National President & Communications Officer

PPWC Locals

National, Vancouver, BC	☎604-731-1909
Local 1, Castlegar, BC	☎250-365-8116
Local 2, Crofton, BC	☎250-246-9272
Local 5, Delta, BC	☎604-315-7217
Local 8, Nanaimo, BC	☎250-753-8721
Local 9, Prince George, BC	☎ 250-563-5670
Local 15, Kimberley, BC	☎250-427-2954
Local 26, Castlegar, BC	☎250-365-7292 ext.# 21494

Pulp and Paper Industry Pension Plan
1-888-384-7555

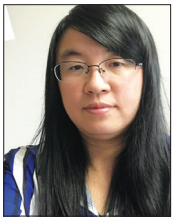
PPWC
Public and Private Workers of Canada

NATIONAL OFFICE

Geoff Dawe
President
nationalpresident@ppwc.ca
250.526.2911

Chuck LeBlanc
1st Vice-President
vp1@ppwc.ca
250.612.9105

Chris Cargill
2nd Vice-President
vp2@ppwc.ca
250.608.7218



Chen Xu
Office & Benefits Administrator
admin@ppwc.ca
604.731.1909

Ryan Grier
Secretary-Treasurer
sectreas@ppwc.ca
250.581.0625

Barry Touzin
Occupational Health & Safety Officer
healthandsafety@ppwc.ca
250.421.3205

Chantel Jones
Layout & Production Admin Coordinator
national@ppwc.ca
604.731.1909

PPWC
Public and Private Workers of Canada

National Office
201 - 1184 West 6th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V6H 1A4
Telephone: 604.731.1909
Fax: 604.731.6448
Website: www.ppwc.ca

Signed articles appearing in the Leaflet express the views and opinions of the authors. They do not form local or national policies or procedures. We welcome your feedback, opinions and inquiries.

The Leaflet attempts to give coverage to all locals, and pertinent material will be held for the future if the space is unavailable in the current issue.

NATIONAL PRESIDENT

Union Wages, Affordable Homes: How Good Jobs Help Solve Canada's Housing Crisis

The affordable housing crisis in Canada is no longer just a big-city issue — it's a national emergency. From downtown Vancouver to small mill towns across British Columbia and beyond, Canadians are being priced out of their own communities. Families are being forced to move further from their jobs, young people are delaying homeownership and even rental housing is increasingly out of reach for the working class.

Governments at all levels have scrambled to respond with new programs, policies, and funding announcements. But while more supply and public investment are critical, one often overlooked solution is hiding in plain sight: good-paying, unionized jobs.

The Public and Private Workers of Canada (PPWC) knows firsthand the power of secure work and livable wages. Our members — whether they're working in pulp and paper, manufacturing, hospitality, education, or environmental services — are part of communities that thrive when workers are respected and fairly compensated. Affordable housing isn't just about bricks and mortar. It's about ensuring people have the income, job security, and work-life balance to build a life where they live.

The Connection Between Income and Housing

It's no secret that housing prices have skyrocketed in recent years. In many parts of Canada, home prices and rents have risen much faster than wages. According to the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, it now takes an income of over $100,000 a year to afford a modest two-bedroom rental in cities like Vancouver or Toronto. Even smaller communities aren't immune — housing inflation has crept into towns that used to be affordable havens for working families but here's the thing: housing is only unaffordable when wages don't keep up.

That's where unionized jobs come in. At the PPWC, we fight for living wages, comprehensive benefits, and job stability. We negotiate contracts that allow our members to support their families, plan for their futures, and afford a decent home in the communities where they work. It's a simple formula that too often gets ignored: when workers earn more, they can afford more — including housing.

Union Wages Mean Community Stability

When a mill job pays a living wage, that doesn't just help one worker — it supports an entire community. Unionized workers are more likely to stay local, invest in their homes, support small businesses, and contribute to the social fabric of their towns. Their children attend the local schools. They volunteer for local teams. They pay taxes that go back into public services.

We've seen this in countless communities where PPWC members live and work. Where mills are strong and jobs are unionized, people have the means to stay rooted. Where good jobs are lost — or replaced by precarious, low-wage work — people are forced to leave, or worse, stay and struggle.

Housing insecurity doesn't just mean someone can't buy a home. It means people are living with stress, instability, and uncertainty — all of which takes a toll on health, relationships, and productivity.

Good jobs are an antidote to this spiral.

Work-Life Balance Matters

Another piece often missing from the housing discussion is work-life balance. It's not just about affording a home — it's about having the time and energy to enjoy it. What's the point of homeownership if you're working 60 hours a week, commuting two hours a day, or picking up side gigs just to make ends meet?

PPWC contracts prioritize quality of life. We negotiate for predictable schedules, fair overtime provisions, paid time off, and workplace safety. That kind of balance gives workers more than just money — it gives them time. Time to be with family. Time to care for aging parents. Time to participate in their community. And time to rest.

This stability is essential to making a house a home. It's also crucial for mental health, community participation, and even housing maintenance — renters and homeowners alike need breathing room in their lives to truly thrive.

What Needs to Happen

Governments should be doing more to support housing affordability, including building more non-market housing, controlling speculation, and protecting tenants. But they should also recognize that strengthening unions and raising wages is part of the solution.

We need:

•Stronger labour standards that ensure all workers — not just union members — have the right to fair wages and safe conditions.

•Support for unionization efforts, especially in low-wage sectors where housing affordability is most out of reach.

•Partnerships between government, industry, and labour to link affordable housing projects to good jobs, so that workers building homes can afford to live in them too.

And we need more recognition that solving the housing crisis requires more than just building units. It means building an economy where working people are respected, fairly paid, and able to live with dignity.

Affordable housing isn't just a construction challenge. It's an economic justice issue. And part of that justice must come from ensuring workers have the power and pay to live well. PPWC members are proof that union jobs can provide not only a good wage, but a good life — and that's what every Canadian deserves.

If we want real, lasting solutions to Canada's housing crisis, we need to look beyond just policies and blueprints. We need to look at people. At workers. At the jobs that sustain families and the wages that make homes affordable.

Good jobs and good homes go hand in hand. Let's build both.

Article by, Geoff Dawe, PPWC National President

NATIONAL
1st VICE-PRESIDENT

Wow, where did the summer go?? Fall is definitely in the air now. I hope everyone had an opportunity to take some much-needed time away from work to recharge our batteries and connect with our families!

It's a busy time of the year for us here at the national office. We are currently moving the pulp pattern agreement around the province's pulp mills, trying to get to the table for first collective agreements with our Skookumchuck and Crofton supervisors all while organizing, lobbying government, keeping abreast of what's happening in our industries and keeping our office running smoothly. Thanks to Chen and Chantel for making the office a great place to work in.

Our world is evolving daily with more tariffs (softwood lumber), education shortfalls for our Colleges and Universities, increases to input costs for our manufacturing plants, which puts a lot of strain on our members and their families. Keep an eye out for your fellow Union members and offer support wherever you can. We will need to rely on our fellow members to get through this crazy time in our lives.

Stay strong, get involved and try to make a difference in our day to day lives!

In Solidarity, Chuck LeBlanc, 1st Vice-President

NATIONAL
2nd VICE-PRESIDENT

Collective Representation is the process through which individuals, as members of a group, act through an authorized body or representative to negotiate, advocate, and protect their common interests in matters such as employment, working conditions, benefits, and human rights. It ensures that the group exercises its rights collectively rather than individually, thereby strengthening its bargaining power and influence.

Why Collective Representation Matters

Unionism exists because one worker alone has little power when facing the weight of an employer. Wages, benefits, job security, and working conditions are not given freely, they are bargained and defended! Through collective power, workers negotiate as equals across the table, creating agreements that preserve fairness and dignity throughout our workplaces.

For the PPWC, this principle is more than just a technical process. Unified advocacy is how we turn our shared values into real protections: the safety clauses that prevent injuries, the wage scales that put food on families' tables, the vacation rights that give us rest, and the pensions that secure our futures. Every part of the Collective Agreement is the result of workers coming together and saying, "We deserve better, and we will fight for it."

Beyond the Bargaining Table

Representation does not end once an agreement is signed. Employers will always test the boundaries of what our union has negotiated. That is why grievance handling and arbitration are central to unionism. Every grievance advanced is more than an individual complaint, it is a defense of the contract itself. When we defend one member, we defend all members, ensuring that hard-won gains are not quietly eroded over time.

Arbitrations can be costly, sometimes reaching six figures, but they represent an investment in fairness and in the credibility of the collective agreement. If a Collective Agreement is not enforced, it is weakened. By standing behind our members and pursuing grievances with diligence, we send a clear message: the contract means what it says, and it will be upheld.

A Social Approach

As a ground-up democratic union, the PPWC sees member representation as extending beyond the four walls of the workplace. We know that workers' struggles are bound up with broader issues, affordability, the environment, health care, education, and social justice. When we take part in these wider fights, we are not stepping outside our role as a union; we are fulfilling it.

This power, then, is not just about bargaining contracts or resolving grievances. It is about giving workers a voice in shaping the society we live in. It is about recognizing that the influence of working people must extend beyond the bargaining table, into the decisions that affect our daily lives and the future of our communities.

The Living Force of Unionism

This pillar of unionism reminds us that we are more than individuals, we as are unified with shared interests and shared power. Our representation ensures that the sacrifices of those members who fought before us are not forgotten, and that the rights we enjoy today are preserved and expanded for future generations.

In Solidarity,
Chris Cargill, PPWC National 2nd Vice- President,
September NEB Report

NATIONAL
HEALTH AND SAFETY OFFICER

As the days get shorter and hockey season starts to get going, I hope everyone had a good summer and you have been able to take a little time for yourself and your family.

As I write this report, we are just over two months away from the Joint Safety Conference November 17th and 18th and the 19th to 21st is the PPWC Safety Conference. The focus on the Joint Safety Conference is "Are we learning from our mistakes". The keynote speaker and presenter is Bill Yearwood. He just retired from Transport Canada Aviation. He was a lead investigator for airplane crashes in Canada. There are many others that will be providing courses that should be interesting for all attending. Local 2 will be presenting for PPWC and I am looking forward to it. What makes this Conference a success is the funding from the pulp and paper mill in our province.

This Safety Conference is covered by the JLA and would like to have the support of the Locals to start requesting that the respective companies comply. The language in the JLA will explain that we were above the fifty-thousand-dollar threshold, but as of last two years it fell well below this. Letters requesting payment were sent out in the early new year and follow up letters were sent out again in August. I can provide the letters for reference.

The PPWC Safety Conference will have representatives from WorkSafeBC providing updates on what they will be focusing on in the next year. I am hoping that there will be safety officers and education department there. This should all be confirmed in the very near future.

There will be a form going out asking the JOHS members to provide info for the training planned on day two and getting these reports back would help will the structure of the training planned.

The Workers Advocate (WCB) training course will be held on February 2 to 5, 2026 in Vancouver, B.C.

I have been hearing some horror stories about how companies have been using Bill 41, making employees return to work or risk being cut off. I will be asking the advocates to bring reports to the PPWC Safety Conference and seek some legal advice on what the workers' rights are.

The Health and Welfare Conference will be held on March 9 - 12, 2026, in Vancouver, B.C.

In Solidarity,
Barry Touzin, Health and Safety Officer September NEB Report

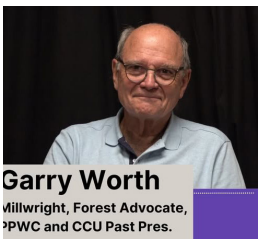
Howe Sound 2025 Scholarship Recipients

Congratulations to Brianne Craver (L), Autumn Vickery (C) and Kit Fleming (R), Howe Sounds 2025 recipients.

"We sincerely appreciate your support of our students through the Public and Private Workers of Canada Award. It was a pleasure to celebrate and acknowledge the accomplishments of our graduating class. Your generous contribution plays a meaningful role in helping students follow their chosen paths—and for some, it may be the key that allows them to pursue post-secondary education. Thank you for making a difference in their future.

Again, on behalf of all staff at Howe Sound Secondary, I sincerely thank you for the support you have given our graduates."

Michelle Watson, Howe Sound Secondary



In Memoriam of Former PPWC National President Garry Worth

The PPWC is saddened to hear of the passing of former National President Garry Worth. Garry passed away on July 25th at the age of 81.

Garry was the National President from 1995 to 2000. Garry also served the CCU as National President from 1989 to 1994.

The PPWC would like to extend our heartfelt condolences to the Worth Family.

Rest in Peace Brother, PPWC

FROM THE **LOCALS**

At Local 1, we currently have 285 active members, with 13 members on Weekly Indemnity (WI), 6 on Long-Term Disability (LTD), and 5 on WorkSafe.

I'm pleased to report that on June 25th, we finalized our ratification vote for the new collective agreement. The result was positive, with 95% voting in favour and approximately 55% of the membership participating.

We have an expedited arbitration scheduled for October 22nd. Settlement discussions are ongoing and appear promising. Another grievance is scheduled for arbitration in July 2026, though it may be advanced to January 2026 depending on the arbitrator's availability for another matter.

Local 1 - Labour Day Picnic

Currently, we have five additional grievances at Step 4, awaiting membership approval to proceed to arbitration.

Denied and cancelled time off—particularly vacation—continues to be a major issue for our members. It's likely this matter will also be advanced to arbitration in the near future.

We hosted our annual Labour Day Picnic on September 1st. This event continues to be a great opportunity for members, retirees, and their families to come together. The Local provides plenty of food, drinks, and snacks, and activities like face painting, colouring, and park games to keep the kids entertained. However, securing volunteers for events like this has become increasingly difficult. We're hopeful this will improve moving forward.

In July, our stripper gas tank exploded, causing an unexpected two-week shutdown at the mill. A locked-out flame arrester was identified as a key factor; had it been operational, it might have prevented the explosion. Static electricity may also have played a role. The investigation is still ongoing, but the final report is expected to outline all contributing factors and identify the root cause. During the downtime, the maintenance department used the opportunity to get a head start on work scheduled for the September shutdown.

The mill has experienced significant reliability issues throughout the year. This has led to a shift from a proactive, preventative maintenance culture to a more reactive approach. Equipment failures are increasing, and we believe this may be partly due to the Company's new 18-month major shutdown schedule, which deviates from the traditional 12-month cycle that served us well for decades.

Finally, our new maintenance manager has given notice and will be leaving the Company later this month for another opportunity. Although his time in the role was brief, he brought a level of leadership and experience to the maintenance department that we haven't seen in years. We wish him all the best—he will be an asset wherever he goes.

Dennis MacKinnon, Local 1 First Vice-President,
Sept NEB Report

The 16 trades that accepted the voluntary separation from the company are now all gone. This was the one-time payment of $40,000 to voluntarily leave the company. Our trades group is now severely shorthanded, some trades worse than others. The systems group that looks after all the programming and such in the mill is now gone. How the company is going to manage this when we have issues or breakdowns remains to be seen. Even though the company knew this group was leaving, no training was done to bring anyone up to speed in this area. The company's costs are going to continue to rise as well, with reliance on contractors for maintenance in the mill. This reduction now brings our membership to below 300 and my concern is how long this is going to be sustainable for with running the mill safely and efficiently. The operations group is severely shorthanded as well with basically skeleton crews.

We still have 0 grievances or arbitrations, besides Failure to Notify grievances from our TMO in June. The 2-week shut and TMO in June went fairly well with the company spending a lot of money, about 20 million on it, with lots of good work being done. Standing Committee was informed that we will be switching to a new payroll system in February called WFM (Work Force Management) with about 18 new time clocks installed in various places around the mill. I sure hope this transition goes smoother than when they switched to PGI a few years ago, which was a complete disaster. PGI is also going away and being replaced with E20 in December, which is where pay stubs will be able to be viewed and printed.

Mike Hearsey, Local 2 President, Sept NEB Report

FROM THE **LOCALS**

Local 5 Office - We have now moved into our new office and everything is going well in regards. (New address: 201-4482 Delta Street, Delta, BC)

Skeena Taxi – Nothing to share with the leaflet at this time.

Urban Impact – We assisted to sort out a request for a day off for a family function. We were able to get the company to look into it further with no other problems.

Squamish Savings – Things have been well there once they got their seniority for shifts sorted out.

Signature – We are starting to negotiate this week.

GTAP – The members are happy to have their new contract and retro pay, although some were having a hard time calculating it properly, but the company did get the payroll office to sort it out for everyone.

Lion's Gate Hospital – We have finally got the managers and the committee to start meeting once a month to go over issues before they fester. Trying to get this group on the same page as all the other hospitals.

Children's and Women's Hospital – There has been a casual case and a suspension that has not been settled yet that will go automatically to arbitration, but should finalize quickly.

Canadian Linen – Nothing to share with the leaflet at this time.

Chad Young - Local 5 Sept NEB Report

Shop Steward Training 2025

The state of the business at Canfor is still holding in a pattern of uncertainty. Fiber supplies are decent, with the chip pile inventory at Intercon sitting at around 70 days. However, US trade talks and tariffs are having an impact on sales, particularly with paper. They have lost a few US customers, resulting in a scale back of the paper machine to 80%. Market prices are low, leading to narrow margins.

We have a 4th step grievance process that we are working on. We have also had some unsuccessful mediations and a ruling for a Sunday Letter that we were waiting for a ruling on.

On August 13th we signed a ratified MOU with Chemtrade. With only 6 members they didn't challenge anything on the main wage or the local agenda items. Bargaining started with Canfor Pulp this week.

We recently held our annual Labour Day barbeque. We gave away a couple bicycles to 2 lucky kids. It was great to see a bunch of the retired members show up and enjoy a burger. Thanks again to our Rec committee for putting this on. (Labour Day Barbeque photos: above and to the right).

Greg Petersen Local 9 President - Sept NEB Report

FROM THE **LOCALS**

Local 8 – It has been a very busy summer at the Local. Bylaw votes, working on Collective Agreement language and replacing our stairs at the Union Hall. Adrian was trying to wrap up all the loose ends as he is away on vacation for 4 weeks. Both Mat and I will be taking turns covering at the Union Hall. We may end up having to post for a couple of Plant Chair positions in October as we have 1 plant chair position that is not filled and may have another plant chair stepping down.

Ladysmith– Western Forest Products experienced downtime throughout most of the company over the summer, including our Ladysmith division. AT one of the TFL's North Island, there is a labour dispute which is influencing the amount of fiber being accessed, resulting in a lack of logs coming to the sites. This labour dispute has been ongoing since June. Ladysmith was curtailed from Aug. 1-24 but is now back to work. The company would like to set up some training sessions and include the executive and shop stewards, depending on the workshop. We have been trying to initiate some of that training for 3 years. We are still waiting to find out what is going on with the over-payments to the pension fund.

Value Added Division – The 2 consecutive kilns are in the process of being built. The land has been cleared, power upgrades have been done, and footings have started to go in. The company would like to change the shifts for the forklift drivers. They would like to have an 8-hour crew, Monday to Friday, a 10-hour crew Monday to Thursday and a 12-hour Friday to Sunday crew. There is no language in the collective agreement for that, and the company wants to have discussions on how they can make that happen. Value Added did not take any downtime in the recent Western Forest Products curtailment. The maintenance crew is going to be putting in for a rate revision as both the electrician and millwright are doing much more than their job description. There is no maintenance planner or superintendent, so they are doing all that work.

Long Hoh – It has been a tough last 2 years for the membership of Long Hoh. The mill had about 3 weeks of work for everyone. At our last union meeting, management attended and announced that they do not have any order right now and won't have any until at least next quarter. Curtailed again. The membership was also told that the mill would not be running the same way it did in the past. They are pursuing custom cutting logs and smaller runs. They are open to partnering with larger companies to see if they can make the business work. They are going to be running small crews that can do multiple jobs so they can start in one area of the mill, when that work is done, move to the next section of the mill, and then go to the kilns and shipping once the log is fully processed. They would probably only need 10-15 people. Our lawyers are looking into whether anyone is entitled to any severance.

Modern Niagara – The LOU that was signed regarding casual and part-time operators is on hold as the hospitals are going through a staffing issue. There are 3 members at one hospital who are off and needing surgery. A fourth needs surgery as well but is not getting it done yet. We have recently filed a grievance for casual and part-time operators as the company has not been paying them any shift differential. They are claiming that the 15% premium that they receive for not being able to have benefits covers the shift differential. We are awaiting the third step meeting for that and are prepared to go to arbitration over it.

Harmac – We have a grievance that we are sending to 3rd step regarding coordinator positions and have a date of August 28, to discuss. The company has been putting up postings and not indicating where the coordinator role is needed, and then depending on who is awarded the position, move them to a department that they feel would be the best fit. We feel this is wrong and it has never been done this way, until last year. The company threatened that if we do go to arbitration, they will get rid of all the coordinator positions. We have recently signed off on the wage pattern agreement and the retro payment should be made in September. We also have a grievance around hours of work. According to the collective agreement, on a week where there is a statutory holiday, there is language that the work week should be reduced by a day and that is not being done.

Howe Sound – We are still going through the grievance process, waiting for the Skookumchuck decision, regarding National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, which the company said they would follow the Skookumchuck decision, but we haven't received a copy of that decision. Because we have not gone into collective bargaining yet, the company is saying that we are going to have to file another grievance for Truth and Reconciliation Day this year. We have all our agenda items ready for collective bargaining, and we are just waiting for confirmation of dates to begin the bargaining process.

Roger's Sugar – The Vancouver refinery has lost a major player, Kerry Foods, as they closed their location in Vancouver in June, so 20,000 less tons of sugar. The need for continuous shifting is clearly not needed so we feel that if we would have given in to this in bargaining, layoffs would have been happening for the members. We do have a contracting out grievance that we have filed for arbitration. We have 4 grievances attached to the arbitration. We have a prohibited action complaint filed with Worksafe as we had a member disciplined for bringing up safety concerns to the membership. The Human Resources Manager has been away from the refinery for a couple of months now, and we seem to be making much more progress in dealing with grievances and working more collaboratively.

In Solidarity, Ryan Tysowski Local 8 - 1st Vice-President,
September NEB Report

FROM THE **LOCALS**

The Mill will be introducing the Excellent Way at the Mill. We are hoping it is implemented successfully. The Mill recently hired a scheduler to help with the time entry, we hope this will help with the payroll issues.

The company switched to a new safety reporting/ investigating program. After more than a year, it seems that members are still are having challenges accessing reports or investigations.

We have 8 grievances with lawyers and are working at scheduling dates to be heard by an arbitrator. We are still waiting for the company to pay the retro to stores employees for the last collective agreement. The company green circled their wages so they did not receive the general wage increases. The arbitrator ruled in favour that they should have received the general wage increases.

A major shutdown is schedule for October, the company went to a 18 month schedule and also cut this shutdown in half from original plan.

Mike Scott. Local 15 President, Sept NEB Report

The term for our collective agreement ends Dec 31, 2025. We will be providing notice in writing of termination to the current agreement in order to commence collective bargaining for next year.

Nominations for Local 26 positions will be taking place this month.

The JOHS committee completed very thorough inspections of the campuses and issues that were identified are being dealt with.

The college hosted an employee welcome back event on Aug 27th. Contests, prizes, lunch and comradery was enjoyed by all. Student 'Get Connected' days happened at all campuses with PPWC members volunteering.

In our constant goal of accommodating all members for PPWC Local 26 we are having a poll for accommodating time slots for union meetings.

Domestic student counts are up this year, with international registrations lower due to the federal government restrictions.

Ken Zdebiak, Local 26 September NEB Report

PPWC 2026 EVENTS

February

2nd to 5th	Workers Advocate Seminar

March

9th to 10th	Audit Committee Meeting
9th to 12th	Health and Welfare Conference

April

8th to 9th	Pension Meeting
12th	NEB Meeting, Convention
12th	Resolutions, Convention
13th to 17th	Labour School/Convention

June

2nd	Audit Committee Meeting
3rd to 4th	NEB Meeting
24th to 25th	Pension Meeting (Nanaimo)

September

15th	Audit Committee Meeting
16th and 17th	NEB Meeting
23rd to 24th	Pension Meeting

December

2nd to 3rd	Pension Meeting
8th	Audit Committee Meeting
9th to 10th	NEB Meeting

PPWC 2025 BURSARIES

ORVILLE BRAATEN - ANGUS MACPHEE

These $1,000 bursaries are given annually through PPWC National in January. They are available to all PPWC members in good standing, including their spouses and dependants. Please go online to apply at https://ppwc.ca/about/documents-and-bursaries/.

Angus MacPhee Bursary	Due: November 1, 2025
Orville Braaten	Due: November 1, 2025

FROM THE **CCU**

CCU President, Greg Ball - Rewriting the Necessity of Unions in Today's Global Economy

We are living through a period of unprecedented economic upheaval — not just here in Canada, but across the globe. The signs are everywhere: record corporate profits, ballooning CEO compensation, and astronomical stock buybacks for the wealthiest shareholders. And yet, wage earners — the very people whose labour makes these profits possible — are struggling to make ends meet.

Wage stagnation has become a defining feature of our era. For decades now, worker productivity has increased steadily, but wages have flatlined. According to Statistics Canada, inflation-adjusted average hourly wages have barely budged since the early 1980s. Meanwhile, housing prices, food costs, tuition fees, and childcare expenses have skyrocketed. The result? A working class that is working harder and longer — for less and less.

This growing inequality isn't a little bug in the system. It's a feature. It's the predictable outcome of an economic model that privileges Big Business over labour, and profits over people. Forty years of corporate tax cuts, so-called "free trade" agreements, deregulation, tax havens for billionaires and giant financial conglomerates, and massive, multi-billion dollar cutbacks to social services were supposed to "improve productivity" for our economy, "create jobs" for the unemployed and help wealth "trickle down" to the working class.

Of course, none of that happened. And while the corporate elite and political establishment celebrate "economic growth," most of that wealth is flowing to the top 1%, not to the families who wake up every day and power our economy.

Just this week, Statistics Canada reported that the wealth gap in Canada reached its highest level in recorded history, with the wealthiest 20% of households owning almost two-thirds (64.7%) of the total net worth. This contrasts sharply with the poorest 40%, who hold only 3.3% of the nation's wealth

That's why labour unions are not just relevant — they are absolutely essential.

A Force for Fairness, and Freedom

Labour unions are the single most powerful force working people have to fight back. They are democratic organizations built on solidarity, rooted in the fundamental belief that we are stronger together. When workers join together in unions, they gain the collective power to bargain for higher wages, better benefits, and safer working conditions.

The data is clear. Unionized workers in Canada earn, on average, 23% more than their non-union counterparts. They are more likely to have extended health benefits, paid sick days, pensions, job security, and protections against arbitrary termination. They are also more likely to be treated with respect and dignity on the job. They call it "the union advantage" for a reason.

But unions don't just lift up their own members — they raise standards across the board. When unions negotiate better pay and conditions, it puts upward pressure on wages for all workers in a sector. In fact, some of the greatest victories for Canadian workers — the weekend, the eight-hour day, workplace safety laws, parental leave, minimum wage increases — were won because of the organizing power and political advocacy of unions.

A Global Struggle

The struggle for workers' rights is not confined within Canadian borders. Around the world, the same patterns are repeating: wage suppression, union busting, privatization of public services, radically increasing inequality, erosion of labour laws, and the rise of precarious gig work.

In developing countries, multinational corporations exploit cheap labour and weak regulations to drive down costs and maximize profits. In the Global North, governments are pushing austerity while allowing billionaires to hoard wealth offshore. It's a race to the bottom, and workers everywhere are paying the price.

Unions are the frontline defence against this global corporate assault. In places like Bangladesh, Brazil, the Philippines, and South Africa, courageous trade unionists are risking their lives to organize workers in dangerous conditions. They are fighting for the same things we are: a living wage, the right to organize, and dignity in work.

A New Generation Rising

Despite what some may claim, young workers are not apathetic about unions — they are hungry for change. They see through the hollow promises of gig economy jobs and corporate "wellness" programs. They want security, rights, and a future they can believe in.

From Starbucks baristas in the United States, to tech workers in Silicon Valley, to Amazon workers in New York, to education and health care workers here in Canada, a new generation of workers is rediscovering the power of collective action. And they are winning.

In the United States, an August 2024 Gallup Poll showed that 77% of young workers aged 18 to 34 approve of unions, compared with 66% of workers aged 55 and older. For Americans of all ages, 70% have a favourable view of unions. The last time this number was this high was 1965. Yes, you read that right: even in the US, the favourability of unions is at a sixty year high.

Recent polling from GQR Canada in April 2024 shows that 62% of Canadians believe belonging to a union is good, while 70% want governments to remove barriers to forming or joining a union. 80% of young workers aged 18 to 29 understand there are obstacles to joining a union. They know what the challenges are, yet they're still ready and willing to fight.

It's up to us in the labour movement to support them, mentor them, and open the doors to leadership. Our strength lies in our ability to adapt and grow, and to

welcome new energy into our ranks. The future of the union movement depends on it.

The Political Battle

Make no mistake — unions are under attack, not just in the workplace, but in the political arena as well. Right-wing governments and corporate lobbyists are doing everything they can to weaken labour protections, limit organizing rights, and undermine the ability of unions to speak out.

They know what we know: unions are one of the last major barriers to unchecked corporate power. That's why they want to silence us.

But as always, we will continue to fight for laws that protect workers, for strong public services, for a fair tax system, and for climate justice. We will mobilize in communities, in legislatures, and at the ballot box.

The Confederation of Canadian Unions and its affiliates throughout the country are proud to lead this fight. We represent thousands of workers across the country in both the public and private sectors — and we speak with one voice: the voice of working people.

The Road Ahead

The challenges ahead are indeed daunting. Technological change, automation, and artificial intelligence are reshaping the economy in ways we are only beginning to understand. Climate change threatens our very survival. And inequality continues to deepen, creating political instability and social unrest.

But the solution is not to abandon solidarity. Now more than ever, we need strong unions that can protect workers, redistribute wealth, and build a just society and a sustainable economy.

We need to remind Canadians that unions are builders of the future, one where no one is left behind. A future where every worker has a voice. A future where dignity, democracy, and fairness define our society.

Together, we will organize. We will resist. And we will win.

Greg Ball, CCU President Article written: July 2025

Pexels/Toni Cuenca

SHOP STEWARDS' CORNER

Shop Steward Corner - Representing our members and ensuring their rights are respected

Hello Shop Stewards. Here are a few tips on representing our members and ensuring their rights are respected.

Best Practices for Shop Stewards in Disciplinary Meetings:

As a shop steward, your role in a disciplinary meeting is critical. You are the voice and advocate for the union member, ensuring fairness, due process, and protection of rights. Here are the best practices to follow when representing a member:

1. Prepare Thoroughly

- Know the case: Gather as much information that you can before entering the meeting with management.
- Meet with the member: Understand their side of the story, gather relevant facts, and identify any mitigating circumstances.
- Review the contract: Be familiar with the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) and any relevant labor laws or workplace policies.

2. Ensure Procedural Fairness

- Member Rights: Remind the member of their right to union representation during investigatory interviews.
- Demand transparency: Ensure the employer provides clear reasons for the disciplinary action and access to all evidence.
- Challenge procedural errors: If the employer fails to follow proper procedures, raise objections formally.

3. Advocate Effectively

- Stay calm and professional: Maintain composure and speak respectfully, even when challenging management.
- Present facts clearly: Use evidence and logical arguments to support the member's case.
- Highlight mitigating factors: Emphasize the member's work history, intent, and any external circumstances that may have influenced the situation.

4. Protect the Member's Rights

- Object to unfair treatment: If the member is being treated differently than others in similar situations, raise concerns about discrimination or inconsistency.
- Take notes: Document everything said and done during the meeting for future reference.
- Request breaks: If the member becomes overwhelmed, ask for a pause to regroup.

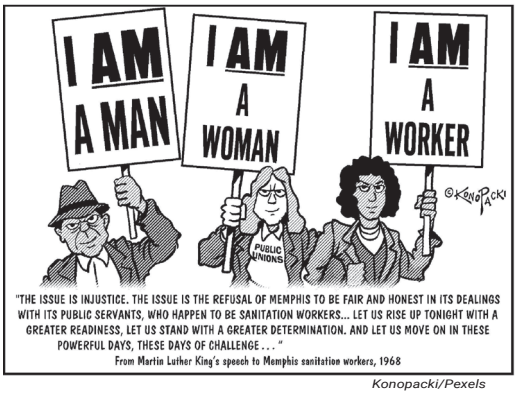
5. Follow Up

- Debrief the member: After the meeting, explain what happened, what was agreed upon, and next steps.
- Monitor outcomes: Ensure any disciplinary action taken is consistent with policy and precedent.
- File grievances if necessary: If the outcome is unjust, initiate the grievance process promptly.
- Always get back to the member: Keeping our member informed on what's happening with their issue is crucial to trust and transparency.

It is important to understand that the role you have taken on can be a rewarding and sometimes frustrating task!

Your Local and it's members thank you for stepping up and fulfilling such an important part of our structure and giving back to our membership. Thank You!!

Article by: Chuck LeBlanc, National VP1


I AM A MAN
I AM A WOMAN
I AM A WORKER
PUBLIC UNIONS
©KONOPACKI
"THE ISSUE IS INJUSTICE. THE ISSUE IS THE REFUSAL OF MEMPHIS TO BE FAIR AND HONEST IN ITS DEALINGS WITH ITS PUBLIC SERVANTS, WHO HAPPEN TO BE SANITATION WORKERS... LET US RISE UP TONIGHT WITH A GREATER READINESS, LET US STAND WITH A GREATER DETERMINATION. AND LET US MOVE ON IN THESE POWERFUL DAYS, THESE DAYS OF CHALLENGE..."
From Martin Luther King's speech to Memphis sanitation workers, 1968

Konopacki/Pexels

Tell us your story! Write to your union!

PPWC
Public and Private Workers of Canada

Articles should be between 250 and 700 words in length.

Please submit any relevant graphics with your article. Please send your articles to national@ppwc.ca.